

COMM 2-6

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7 October 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: Special Assistant (Exchanges), OO/C

SUBJECT: City Planning Exchange

REFERENCE: Your Memorandum for the Record, 24 September 1959,  
same subject

1. In our opinion, an exchange of US-USSR city planners would produce a net intelligence advantage for the United States. The extent of the U.S. advantage would depend upon the USSR cities visited and the accessibility of the U.S. group to intelligence briefing officers prior to departure.

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2. Information on layout, development plans, and location of important establishments is lacking for most Soviet cities.

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City planning specialists, properly briefed, should be able to contribute uniquely to the acquisition of elements of this information, not only through observation but also through elicitation in the course of technical discussions with their Soviet hosts. We would also anticipate some possible return in the form of unique urban mapping to which this specialist group may have access.

3. We feel that the Soviet group, on the other hand, is not likely to obtain new information of intelligence significance. A wide variety of open sources provide information on the U.S. cities cited in your memorandum. In addition, data on U.S. urban planning theory and practice are available to the Soviets through a variety of professional publications and international planners meetings, the last of which was held some time ago in Moscow.

4. It is recommended that the proposed exchange be encouraged. Recognizing that the exchange will of necessity include such fairly adequately covered cities as Moscow, Leningrad, Minsk, Kiev, and Khar'kov, it is recommended that half of the itinerary (three cities) be made up of such cities, and that the second half include three of the following cities: Gor'kiy, Kuybyshev, Angarsk, Novosibirsk, and Irkutsk. These cities are

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less frequently visited and therefore more important intelligence-wise. They are plausible as selections to be put forward by a city planner group. If negotiations come to a standstill over the selection of these cities, Chelyabinsk, Baku, Kazan', Noril'sk, Stalinsk, Tomsk, Komsomol'sk, or Yerevan may be substituted for cities in the second group. If feasible, the itinerary of cities in the United States might be expanded to include at least one additional closed city to strengthen our bargaining position in the negotiations for the USSR cities.

5. Additionally, it is recommended that, after the itinerary is firm, steps be taken to insure that appropriate members of the U.S. delegation are briefed in detail on key intelligence gaps.


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Chief, Geographic Research  
Research and Reports

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